

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 065604

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ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

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E. O. 11652, N/ A

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SO, UR

US MISSION NATO FOR AMB. WITMAN

SUBJ: ARTICLE ON SOMALI- SOVIET RELATIONS

1. N. Y. TIMES OF APRIL 9 CARRIED ARTICLE ENTITLED " U. S. HEARS SOVIET HAS SOMALI BASES." CITING " AMERICAN MILITARY ANALYSTS," ARTICLE DESCRIBED SOVIET " LONG- RANGE COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY" AT UNDISCLOSED LOCATION " THROUGH WHICH NAVAL HEADQUARTERS IN MOSCOW CAN DIRECTLY CONTROL MOVEMENTS OF ITS WARSHIPS THROUGHOUT INDIAN OCEAN."

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PAGE 02 STATE 065604

FACILITY " ONLY ONE OF NUMBER FAIRLY RECENT INDICATORS
RISING SOVIET MILITARY INTEREST IN SOMALIA."

2. ANALYSTS REPORTED AS ESTIMATING SOVIET MILITARY
ADVISORS AND TECHNICIANS HAD INCREASED FROM A FEW HUNDRED
TO 2,500 IN PAST YEAR. GIVEN SIZE SOMALI ARMY, NUMBER
SOVIETS UNUSUALLY LARGE AND ONE OF LARGEST SOVIET MILITARY
ADVISORY CONTINGENTS IN WORLD. ANALYSTS DREW CONTRAST
WITH APPROXIMATELY 100 U. S. MILITARY ADVISORS IN ETHIOPIA
WHERE ARMY MUCH LARGER AND U. S. HAS LONG- ESTABLISHED
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

3. ARTICLE LISTS PERSISTENT REPORTS THAT SOMALIS HAVE
GRANTED SOVIETS USE OF STAGING, MAINTENANCE AND REFUELING

FACILITY AT BERBERA AIRPORT IN RETURN FOR SOVIET
EXPANSION OF AIRPORT. SOVIETS ALSO MAINTAIN ANCHORAGE
OFF SOMALI COAST AND SOVIET WARSHIPS HAVE VISITED
BERBERA TWENTY TIMES DURING PAST YEAR. ACCORDING TO
ANALYSTS, SOVIETS HAVE DELIVERED " MODEST NUMBERS"
IL-28 S, MIG-15 S, P-6 PT BOATS, APCs AND AAA AND ARE
BUILDING NEW AIRFIELD NEAR MOGADISCIO.

4. " SENIOR PLANNER" STATED U. S. DID " NOT KNOW QUITE WHAT
TO MAKE OF THIS FLURRY ACTIVITY IN SOMALIA." HE ADDED
RUSSIANS APPEAR TO BE EXPLOITING SOMALI- ETHIOPIAN
TENSIONS TO ESTABLISH FOOTHOLD " FROM WHICH THEY CAN
COORDINATE GROWING NAVAL ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT INDIAN
OCEAN, PERSIAN GULF AND RED SEA."

5. ARTICLE MENTIONED SOMALI IRREDENTIST CLAIMS AND
HISTORY OF SPORADIC INSURGENCY. IT SAID BUILDUP ADVI-
SORS AND ARMS AND SOVIET AIRFIELD AND PORT CONSTRUCTION
HAD MOSTLY OCCURRED AFTER 1972 GRECHKO VISIT. ANALYSTS
BELIEVE SOVIETS WOULD LIKE A BASE FOR TU-16 RECONNAI-
SANCE MISSIONS OVER INDIAN OCEAN. SAME ANALYSTS
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT NO SOVIET- PILOTED AIRCRAFT HAVE
LANDED IN SOMALIA EXCEPT TO DELIVER MILITARY EQUIPMENT.

6. ARTICLE CONCLUDES SOVIETS REPORTEDLY HAVE SUBSTANTIAL
NUMBERS OF POLITICAL ADVISORS AT " NEARLY EVERY LEVEL OF
SOMALI GOVERNMENT" INCLUDING PRESIDENT SIAD' S OFFICE
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PAGE 03 STATE 065604

AND NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE.

7. AT APRIL 9 DEPT NOON PRESS BRIEFING, NO QUESTIONS
ASKED ON SUBJECT. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR
BRIEFING: " WE ARE AWARE OF THE ALLEGATIONS BUT I CAN
NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY THEM AND I HAVE NO FURTHER
COMMENT."

DECON 4/9/74 ROGERS

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